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ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY SERVICE COUNCIL

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AGRICULTURAL BUFFER ZONE SUBCOMMITTEE - MEETING SUMMARY

Meeting Date: August 4, 1998
Meeting Time: 10:30 a.m.
Meeting Place: State House, 200 W. Washington St.,
Room 128
Meeting City: Indianapolis, Indiana
Meeting Number: 2

Members Present: Rep. Richard Mangus; Mike Carnahan; Randy Edgemon; Gary Reding.

Members Absent: Rep. Mark Kruzan, Chair; Sen. Vi Simpson; Kerry Michael Manders; John Walker.

Randy Edgemon, filling in as Chair of the Environmental Quality Service Council's (EQSC) Agricultural Buffer Zone Subcommittee for Rep. Kruzan, called the meeting to order at 10:35 a.m.

Patti Yount, Deputy Commissioner for Public Policy and Planning for the Indiana Department of Environmental Management (IDEM), gave an overview of the Wildcat Creek Pilot Project. She added the following comments. The goal of the project is to improve water quality using a watershed approach. The project involves cooperation among local, state, and federal partners. IDEM is trying to create a strong local foundation of support to continue the project. Extensive water monitoring and analysis is taking place. In response to a question from Mr. Edgemon, Ms. Yount stated that the following lessons have been learned from the project: good planning at the local level is necessary; all available facts need to be given to decision-makers and the public; and it is important to look at new technology.

Susan McCloud, the Natural Resources Conservation Service Liaison to IDEM, explained that some of the partners of the Wildcat Creek Pilot Project include soil and water conservation districts, municipalities, the Department of Natural Resources, local health departments, the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, county government, and IDEM, which is taking the lead.

Dr. James Gammon, a DePauw University Professor, provided Subcommittee members with the following materials¹: Proceedings of the Indiana Academy of Science, Volume 103, Number 3-4 and a brochure entitled *Effects of Animal Feedlots and Pastures on Water Quality and Stream Biota*. Dr. Gammon noted that the chief problem today with the Wabash River is that there is too much algae and there are too many nutrients going into the river to support the algae. Dr. Gammon explained that attributes of an intact riparian zone include shade, which keeps algae down and roots, which provide good habitat, stabilizes banks, and decreases erosion.

Ron Birt, with the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (U.S.D.A.) Farm Service Agency, provided materials on the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP).² He made the following comments about the CRP. It is administered jointly by the Farm Service Agency and the Natural Resources Conservation Service. The CRP is the largest conservation project in the U.S. To date, approximately 285,000 acres in Indiana have been enrolled in the CRP.

Darrell Brown, a Conservation Agronomist with the U.S.D.A.'s Natural Resources Conservation Service, provided materials on buffer/filter strips.³ He explained that the National Conservation Buffer Initiative's goal is to establish two million miles of conservation buffers by the year 2002.

Mr. Edgemon announced that he would present a report at the next full EQSC meeting.

Mr. Edgemon adjourned the meeting.

¹These materials are on file in the Legislative Information Center (LIC), Room 230, Statehouse, Indianapolis, Indiana. The telephone number of the LIC is (317) 232-9856, and the mailing address is 200 W. Washington St., Suite 301, Indianapolis, Indiana 46204-2789.

²These materials are on file in the LIC (see footnote 1).

³These materials are on file in the LIC (see footnote 1).